

1           1.     A method of remotely generating a unique printer pass code recognizable by  
2 a printer, the method comprising:

3                 providing a unique character string for a printer;  
4                 mathematically manipulating the unique character string; and  
5                 recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string as a pass code.  
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7           2.     The method of claim 1, wherein providing a unique character string for a  
8 printer comprises locating a printer serial number resident within the printer.  
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10          3.     The method of claim 2, wherein locating a printer serial number resident with  
11 in the printer comprises locating a printer serial number programmed into a digital controller  
12 during manufacturing of the printer.  
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14          4.     The method of claim 1, wherein providing a unique character string for a  
15 printer is conducted by a user of the printer and wherein mathematically manipulating the  
16 unique character string comprises entering the character string into a computer program  
17 which receives the character string as input, conducting mathematical manipulations on the  
18 character string, and outputting the result as the pass code.  
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20          5.     The method of claim 1, further comprising entering the pass code into the  
21 printer.  
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23          6.     The method of claim 5, wherein recognizing the mathematically manipulated  
24 character string as a pass code is conducted subsequent to entering the pass code into the  
25 printer and further comprises the printer conducting a mathematical manipulation similar to  
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7. The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling a previously dormant feature of the printer in response to a favorable result of recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string as a correct pass code for the printer.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein mathematically manipulating the unique character string comprises conducting a series of mathematical operations on the character string.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein mathematically manipulating the unique character string further comprises truncating the result of the series of mathematical operations on the character string.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing the pass code to a customer in return for the customer performing a desired action.

11. A printer pass code system, for remotely generating a unique printer pass code recognizable by a printer, the system comprising:

a unique character string assigned to a printer;

a manipulation algorithm for mathematically manipulating the unique string;

and

a verification module within the printer for recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string as a pass code.

1           12. The system of claim 11, wherein the unique character string comprises a  
2 printer serial number resident within the printer.

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4           13. The system of claim 12, wherein the printer serial number resident with in the  
5 printer comprises a printer serial number programmed into a digital controller of the printer  
6 during manufacturing of the printer.

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8           14. The system of claim 11, wherein the manipulation algorithm is embodied in  
9 a computer program which is configured to receive the character string as input, conduct  
10 mathematical manipulations on the character string, and output the result as the pass code.

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12           15. The system of claim 11, wherein the printer is configured to receive entry of  
13 the pass code by a user.

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15           16. The system of claim 15, wherein the verification module is located within the  
16 printer and is configured to receive the pass code and to conduct a mathematical manipulation  
17 similar to the one used to generate the pass code and to compare the result to the pass code  
18 entered into the printer to see if the two codes correspond.

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20           17. The system of claim 11, further comprising a feature enablement module  
21 configured to enable a previously dormant feature of the printer in response to a favorable  
22 result of the validation module recognizing the mathematically manipulated character string  
23 as a correct pass code for the printer.

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25           18. The system of claim 11, wherein the mathematical manipulation module is  
26 configured to conduct a series of mathematical operations on the character string.

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19. The system of claim 18, wherein the mathematical manipulation module is configured to truncate the result of the series of mathematical operations on the character string.

20. The method of claim 11, further comprising a feature of the printer that is accessible to a customer only with the use of the pass code.